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The yard immediately about each house or group of houses of course went with it; the square ground, chunky yard, and hot house were the property of the community. Gardens, as Bartram has stated, could be cleared by anyone anywhere within the limits of the town land.[10] And Eakins expresses their attitude toward the private ownership of land by the quotation, "It is for me, for thee, and for all." He adds, however, that improvements were sometimes sold.[11] This applied to the Creeks in their western home about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Regarding the town lands Stiggins says:

"The inhabited parts of the nation are laid out into town districts designated from some creek, ridge, or point to some other noted point which boundary is organized into certain town corporated precincts under the moral guardianship of their *mic cul ga*." [12] The inhabitants of each town claimed an exclusive right to hunt in the territory immediately about it, and according to Stiggins men of one town approached another "with seeming diffidence, though the towns may be contiguously situated." [13] At times an agreement was entered into by the members of a town to refrain from hunting in a certain territory for a definite period. A kind of taboo similar to the device common among the Polynesians was laid upon it and it was called "ikána tcaka," "the sacred or consecrated land." At the expiration of the time fixed upon the people entered this tract and hunted there together. Bears were the chief animals which they expected to find.

The management of the large town fields is instructive. Bartram says of them:

"Every town or community assigns a piece of land as near as may be to the town, for the sake of convenience. This is called the *town plantation*, where every family or citizen has his parcel or share, according to desire or convenience, or the largeness of his family. The shares are bounded by a strip of grass ground, poles set up, or any other natural or artificial boundary, so that the whole plantation is a collection of lots joining each other, comprised in one enclosure or general boundary." [14]

These fields were planted and cultivated by the town working together, all attending to the several plots in turn. They harvested at the same time, but then each family harvested from its own plot. A part of the produce of each lot was placed in a public granary under the charge of the chief.

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[10] Bartram in Trans. Am. Eth. Soc., vol. III, p. 37.
[11] Eakins in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. I, p. 277.
[12] Stiggins, Ms. Hist. Narr., p. 15.
[13] Ibid., p. 19.
[14] Bartram, op. cit., p. 39.

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as it appeared in 1912. This was largely because it was thought that to sleep much with women enervated a man and incapacitated him as a warrior.[30] Adair says that in their town houses the women were separated from the warriors, and were merely allowed to sit at each side of the entrance "as if they were only casual spectators,"[31] and anciently they had no seats on the square ground. Among the Chickasaw six old beloved women were the only participants in the annual ceremony.[32]

Regarding the labors of women the last mentioned writer declares: "The women are the chief, if not the only, manufacturers; the men judge that if they performed that office, it would exceedingly depreciate them."[33] In fact women anciently, in addition to the indoors work of the house, made all of the pottery and basketry, and did all of the spinning and weaving of bison hair, mulberry bark, etc. The initial preparation of skins was sometimes performed by men, but most of the subsequent work upon it fell to the women. They made drying frames and dried peaches and other fruits upon them, and they of course pounded the corn and did the cooking.

The principal occupations of the men were hunting, ball playing, war, and rites connected with the use of medicine and ceremonial affairs. They built the houses, the corncribs, and the structures belonging to the square ground, felled trees, made canoes and mortars, drums, pipes, calumets, ball sticks, and of course in olden times the axes and the arrows, bows, war clubs, and most of the other articles used in hunting and war. When hunting at a distance from home they cut up the meat, loaded it on horses, and brought it back. It is evident that their labors amounted to considerable in the aggregate, although they were not so evenly sustained throughout the year as those of women. The smaller garden plots were cared for almost exclusively by women, but the town fields were tended by individuals of both sexes, and Bartram says that "there are not one-third as many females as males seen at work in their plantations; for, at this season of the year, by a law of the people, they do not hunt, the game not being in season till after their crops or harvest is gathered in, so the males have little else with which to employ themselves."[34] Later on in the season the same writer tells us that the labor falling upon women was harder.

"In the hunting season, that is in autumn and winter, the men are generally out in the forests, when the whole care of the house falls on the women, who are than obliged to undergo a good deal of labor, such as cutting and bringing home the winter's wood, which they toat on their back or head a great distance, especially those of the ancient large towns, where the commons and old fields extend some

[30] Swan in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, p. 272.
[31] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 132.
[32] Ibid., pp. 96-97.
[33] Ibid., p. 422.
[34] Bartram in Trans. Am. Eth. Soc., vol. III, p. 31.

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the old people usually remained in the camps during that time. 221
Bossu says:

"The savages usually set out on the hunt at the end of October. [224]
The Allibamons go to a distance of 60, 80, and even 100 leagues from their village, and they carry along with them in their pirogues their entire family; they return only in March which is the season for sowing their fields. They bring back many skins and much smoked meat. When they have returned to their villages, they feast their friends, and make presents to the old people who have been unable to follow them, and who have protected the cabins of the village during this hunting period."[92]

War parties were usually started as soon as the weather began to warm up a little. The labor of planting was, as we shall see, [241].
interspersed with ball playing and dancing. Right afterwards the men went out again on a hunt. According to one of my informants they thought if they did not do this the crows would eat the corn and the weevil would get into the beans. Then their summer duties began once more, taking care of the harvest occupying first place. War, ball games, riding, horse racing, and dancing also consumed a great deal of the time. Women naturally made their pots and most of their baskets during this period of the year.

War

Out of consideration for standard classifications of customs I retain 721
the name "war" for this section, but it might rather be called "institutional killing," if not "institutional murder." For while the occasions of war were various and "retaliation" for past offenses by the hostile tribe and the necessity of placating the souls of the slain were always the professed objects, the truth of the matter was that war among the southern Indians was a social institution and warlike exploits necessary means of social advancement.[93] This being the case it is easy to see that the score between most tribes was certain never to be evened permanently and that only a social revolution could abolish the custom in spite of the alliances by which certain single units agreed to settle their differences on other grounds. Ambition for scalps was carried so far, Adair assures us, that "sometimes a small party of warriors, on failing of success in their campaign, have been detected in murdering some of their own people, for the sake of their scalps."[94] This result of economic or rather social determinism reminds us of that canny Scotch captain caught in the Baltic Sea in the act of supplying Russia with the sinews of war when his own

[92] Bossu, Nouv. Voy., vol. ii, pp. 51–52.

[93] Bossu gives the abduction of women as one of the most important causes of war. If this happened to the wife of a chief he says that the entire nation was obliged to avenge the insult.—Nouv. Voy., vol. ii, p. 51. I confess to have read few accounts of wars started in this manner.

[94] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 393.

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"The Indians can not shew greater honour to the greatest potentate on earth than to place him in the white seat—invoke Yo He Wah, while he is drinking the Cusseena, and dance before him with the eagles tails. When two chieftains are renewing, or perpetuating friendship with each other, they are treated with the same ceremonies. And in their circular friendly dances, when they honour their guests, and pledge themselves to keep good faith with them, they sometimes sing their divine notes with a very awful air, pointing their right hand towards the sky. Some years ago, I saw the Kooasahte Indians (two hundred miles up Mobile River) perform this rite with much solemnity; as if invoking the deity by their notes and gestures, to enable them to shew good-will to their fellow-creatures, and to bear witness of their faithful vows and conduct." [74]

A peace-making ambassador, besides carrying the swans' wings, was provided with eagles' tails, white beads, white pipes, and tobacco.[75] When Adair visited the Choctaw for the purpose of concluding peace with them, they tied strings of beads about his neck, arms, and legs, and in return he presented to them silver arm-plates, gorgets, wrist plates, ear bobs, and so on.[76]

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture among the Creeks had both an economic and a social side. We are here concerned only with the latter. Each town, in addition to small garden plots worked by individual families, or rather by their female members, had a large common field located as near the town as possible. This was planted with corn chiefly, although beans, squashes, pumpkins, melons, potatoes, and rice are mentioned by early travelers, the last three contributions from the whites. The allotments of the different households were separated by a narrow strip of grass, poles, or any suitable natural or artificial boundary. In caring for this the town acted together, under the charge of an overseer said to have been appointed annually. He called the men to the square by going through the town blowing upon a conch shell or uttering a loud cry. Immediately they gathered with hoes and axes, and then marched in order to the field as if they were going to battle, headed by their overseer. The women followed in detached parties bearing the provisions for the day. Anyone who attempted to shirk was fined. In the field they also worked together, beginning with the patch at one end and going through to the last. In this way they prepared the field, planted it, and cultivated it from time to time until the harvest was ready. While they were at work they sang certain special songs. Generally they suspended work early in the afternoon and indulged in ball games or other sports, which were

[74] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 167-169.
[75] These things are commented by Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 269-270, and 318.
[76] Ibid., p. 321.

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241 followed by a dance in the evening. While the corn was in the ground the young people, under the supervision of some of their elders, were stationed in the fields, where small shelters were often built for them, and drove away any animals and birds coming to disturb it. The boys were armed with bows and arrows, and had acquired such skill with these that Bartram says they loaded themselves with squirrels, birds, and other small game in the course of the day.[77] According to the same writer the men took turns patrolling the field at night, "to protect their provisions from the depredations of night rovers, as bears, raccoons, and deer, the two former being immoderately fond of young corn, when the grain is filled with a rich milk, as sweet and nourishing as cream; and the deer are as fond of the Potatoe vines."[77]

When the harvest was ripe all proceeded to the field in the same manner, but this time each family garnered from his own plot. The women made sacks out of cowskins, and the corn was carried home in these after it had been shucked. Then it was laid away in rows in the different granaries, the better corn farther back as that which would last longest, the worse nearer the entrance. A portion of the harvest, however, each family contributed to a large corncrib, which Bartram says was called "the king's crib."[78] This constituted a [621] reserve supply upon which to fall back when the private granaries gave out. Or it was used to succor other towns, to feed travelers, to supply to war parties, and so on. It was, in fact, a kind of public commissary.

I was told that the ground of the hilis-haya or physic maker was planted by some of the old women in return for his services. This must refer to his garden plot. At Tukabahchee and Kealedji it was close to the northwestern edge of the grounds.

HUNTING

224 Hunting and the ball play were close rivals for the second place after war in the esteem of the ancient Creeks. The former was of course a necessity and has its strictly economic side which does not here concern us. A few words may, however, be said regarding it from the social and religious points of view.

Elsewhere I have spoken of the ancient rights to hunting grounds and of the times of the year when hunting expeditions were undertaken.[78a]

The Creeks usually took medicines and washed their guns in them before they went after game. The Alabama, and probably the Creeks in general, steamed themselves thoroughly in the sweat house and then plunged into a cold stream before they set out. If several

[77] Bartram, Travels, p. 492. [78] Ibid., p. 510. [78a] See pp. 336-337, 404-405.